

U. S. Marine Hospital  
1038 Front Street  
Lahaina  
Maui County  
Hawaii

HABS No. HI-11

HABS  
HI,  
5-LAHA,  
10-

PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS  
HI,  
5 LAHA,  
10-

U. S. MARINE HOSPITAL

HABS No. HI-11

ADDRESS: 1038 Front Street, Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii  
OWNER: Bishop Estate, 519 Halekauwila Street, Honolulu, Hawaii  
OCCUPANT: Tenants, changing from time to time  
USE: Two residential rental units

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The U. S. Marine Hospital is one of the earliest remaining buildings in Lahaina and represents a type of architecture typical of its time. It was used as a hospital for American seamen for about twenty years when Lahaina was an important whaling port and then for about ten years as an Anglican school for girls.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Original and Subsequent Owners:

Joaquin Armas, who came to the Hawaiian Islands from California in 1831 to catch cattle on Hawaii for Kamehameha III and later went into business in Lahaina, was granted the land by the king in 1836. After his death the property was auctioned off in 1855 to a John Nutter, who immediately resold it to Dr. James R. Dow. In 1872 Miss Priscilla Sellon purchased the property from Dr. Dow's estate for St. Cross School. The Anglican Church in Hawaii then purchased the property from Miss Sellon's estate in 1878, retained ownership until 1909, when an exchange was effected with the B. P. Bishop Estate for another piece of property. 1

## Date of Erection:

No exact data is available. It was probably built in the early 1840's, as it was in use as the Marine Hospital in 1844. 2

## Architect, Builder, Original Plans, Etc.:

None available.

## Notes on Alterations:

Described in 1873, when it was St. Cross School for Girls, as follows: "...I found it buried under the shade of the finest candle-nut trees I have yet seen. A rude wooden cross in front... The large house, which is either plastered stone or adobe, contains the dormitories, visitors' room, and oratory. Three houses at the back, all densely shaded, are used as a schoolroom, cook-house, laundry, and refectory. There is a playground under some fine tamarind trees, and an adobe wall encloses, without secluding, the whole. The visitors' room is about twelve feet by eight feet, very bare, ...I crossed to the large, shady, airy schoolroom, ... There are two dormitories, excellently ventilated,..." 3

## Historical Events Connected with Structure:

When Milo Calkin was appointed U. S. Vice-Commercial Agent for Lahaina in February, 1844, sick and destitute seamen were apparently cared for by being boarded out at some private establishment and being given medical care by a physician hired by the Agent. During the first half of 1844, Calkin refers to this arrangement as the Hospital but at the same time emphasizes his need for a hospital building. Fragmentary information indicates that the building known now as the Marine Hospital was in use by the fall of 1844, but it was not clear whether it was built specifically for this purpose or whether some existing building had been taken over. It was not purchased by the U. S. Government but was administered on a contractual basis. At first Armas leased the premises to the person who was running the hospital; but when his estate was settled in 1855, Dr. James Dow, in charge of the hospital at that time, purchased the property. The two-story stone building was used as a marine hospital for nearly twenty years. During this time the Consular Agent, with the physicians and purveyors he employed, made considerable personal profit through graft in the administration of the hospital. The State Department became concerned over the excessive expenditures for destitute seamen in Lahaina as early

as 1852, and in 1859 arranged for an investigation of the Consular system in the Hawaiian Islands. As the result of the fraudulent practices disclosed by this investigation and the decline of the whaling industry, the Lahaina hospital was closed in 1862. <sup>4</sup>

In 1865 the Anglican sisters founded St. Cross School for Girls at the Marine Hospital premises, at first leasing the property and finally purchasing it in 1872. This school continued to operate until 1877. <sup>5</sup>

After the Anglican Church purchased the St. Cross property in 1878, the building was used for many years as a vicarage for the Anglican ministers and gradually deteriorated, until it was exchanged for another piece of property in 1909. <sup>6</sup>

## NOTES

1. Armas, Maui, to Alexander Simpson, British Acting Consul, Feb. 13, 1843, F.O. & Ex., Ah: Land Claim Award 962, State Land Office; Bureau of Conveyances, Honolulu, Record Book 6, pp. 753-4, 747, Book 35, pp. 83ff, Book 54, pp. 132ff; Restarick, Henry Bond, Hawaii 1778-1920 from the Viewpoint of a Bishop, Honolulu, 1924, p. 350; Land Patent No. 8204, State Land Office.
2. Milo Calkin, Lahaina, to William Hooper, ms letters, 1844, UH; The Friend, Nov. 1, 1844, p. 104.
3. Bird, Isabella L., The Hawaiian Archipelago. Six Months Among the Palm Groves, Coral Reefs, and Volcanoes of the Sandwich Islands, pp. 251-4, London, 1875.
4. Milo Calkin, Lahaina, to William Hooper, Honolulu, ms letters, UH; The Friend, 1844; Sandwich Island News, Nov. 18, Nov. 25, Dec. 2, 1847, Apr. 13, 1848; Charles Bunker, Lahaina, to Secretary of State, Oct. 1, 1850, Oct. 23, 1851, Consular Despatches, microfilm, UH; Bureau of Conveyances, Honolulu, Record Book 4, pp. 315-6, Book 6, p. 747; S. Pleasonton, Treasure Department, to Secretary of State, Mar. 24, 1852, Consular Despatches; Polynesian, Apr. 6, 1861; Pacific Commercial Advertiser, Feb. 28, 1861, July 3, 1862.
5. Restarick, op. cit., pp. 117, 345-7; Memorandum by Rt. Rev. Thomas Nettleship Staley, c. 1870, ms, St. Andrews Church Archives; Bureau of Conveyances, Book 35, pp. 83-4.

6. Restarick, op. cit., pp. 347-350; Pacific Commercial Advertiser, Mar. 18, 1901; Report of the Bishop of the Missionary District of Honolulu, 1906-7, St. Andrews Church Archives.

Important Old Views: Restarick, op. cit., p. 345 (drawing of the building at the time it was St. Cross School).

Sources of Information: Lahaina Restoration Foundation Research Files, Lahaina, Maui; University of Hawaii (UH); Hawaii State Archives (Ah); Hawaii State Land Office; Hawaii Bureau of Conveyances.

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